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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ADDIS ABABA 002389

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TAGS: PREL KPKO MARR AU UNSC SO

SUBJECT: SOMALIA: KENYAN AMBASSADOR TO AU BRIEFS CHARGE ON
IGAD PLANS FOR IGASOM

REF: A. NAIROBI 3727

1B. USUN 1581

Classified By: Charge Janet Wilgus for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary: Kenyan Ambassador to the African Union Franklin Esipila told the Charge Aug. 30 that IGAD member states were fully committed to deployment of a peace support mission to Somalia (IGASOM) beginning Sept. 28. Esipila added that member states hoped high-level negotiations in the coming days would achieve a "general consensus" among Somali actors for the deployment, as well as political backing and eventually financial support from the international community. IGAD leaders were open to "bright ideas" from international partners, he said. Kenya would be hosting a heads of state summit on Somalia the week of Sept. 4 and had called for both the TFG and UIC to send senior representatives to talks in Nairobi prior to the summit. Esipila added that IGAD was already looking beyond its membership to other African states to supply troops and other support to IGASOM, and might invite some non-IGAD African leaders to the Nairobi Summit. He acknowledged that the UIC was still opposed to foreign peacekeepers, but argued that sustained pressure and negotiations could change that. The Kenyan Ambassador told the Charge that IGAD leaders still regarded the TFI Charter, which called for national elections in Somalia in 2009, as the political agenda IGASOM would support. He hoped that the UIC would eventually accept this roadmap and lay interim power-sharing demands on the table. Esipila welcomed AF A/S Frazer's increased support for the TFG and suggested that Kenya was best positioned to serve as the broker of a political solution in Somalia. The Kenyan Foreign Minister will brief a group of international partners on the current plan for IGASOM deployment on August 31, and thereafter seek the AU Peace and Security Council's blessing for the plan. IGAD leaders then expect the AU to secure UNSC support for the mission, including an exemption from the UN arms embargo on Somalia. End Summary.

12. (SBU) Charge Wilgus and Pol/Econ Chief called on Kenyan Ambassador to the African Union (AU) and Ethiopia Franklin Esipila Aug. 30 to discuss the Aug. 31 session of the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) on Somalia. Esipila indicated that the Kenyan Foreign Minister would brief the PSC (and separately donor country representatives) on both IGASOM preparations and IGAD diplomatic efforts to stabilize Somalia. He gave the Charge a preview of the PSC

briefing.

MESSAGE TO AU PSC: IGASOM READY TO GO

¶3. (C) Amb. Esipila outlined recent decisions taken at the Aug. 21 meeting of IGAD military chiefs of staff in Nairobi concerning deployment of IGASOM (see ref A). The military planners had agreed on eventual deployment of eight battalions to Somalia, beginning with four in late September. Uganda and Sudan would supply the initial troop contingents; whichever country supplied more would also designate the mission commander. IGAD had also made decisions concerning other mission positions. For example, Kenya would provide the Head of Mission, while a representative from Djibouti would serve as its head of political affairs. Head of Police and other positions had also been designated. The initial cost of the mission would be roughly \$18.5 million, or \$4 million per month. IGAD leaders envisioned deployment on September 28, though Esipila added that member states were eager to hear from international partners about their thoughts on deployment and support. Amb. Esipila said that he had presented this plan to AU member state ambassadors at a PSC meeting on Aug. 25, but the GOK had decided that the Foreign Minister should follow up with an additional briefing on Aug. 31. In the meantime, AU military planners were already scrutinizing the IGASOM plan. The Kenyan ambassador said he knew many Western governments had serious reservations about a government like Sudan -- which had foreign peacekeepers on its own soil -- deploying in Somalia, but he hoped the international community could separate the two issues. He emphasized that IGAD member states -- including

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Djibouti and Sudan -- were fully committed to deployment of a peace support mission to Somalia

HEADS OF STATE SUMMIT TO FOLLOW TFG/UIC NEGOTIATIONS NEXT WEEK

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¶4. (C) Esipila noted that Ethiopian PM Meles had traveled to Nairobi in recent days, and that IGAD Heads of State had agreed to hold a summit meeting in Nairobi the week of September 4. They intended to discuss next steps in Somalia, as well as how to seek international support and financing for IGAD efforts. Esipila added that IGAD was already looking beyond its membership to other African states to supply troops and other support to IGASOM, and might invite some non-IGAD African leaders to the Nairobi Summit. Esipila admitted that IGAD member states needed to keep talking among themselves in order to build mutual trust about each others' motives. The leaders' current thinking called for the AU to present IGASOM deployment plans to the UN Security Council to seek both an exemption to the UN arms embargo on Somalia as well as financial support for the mission. Esipila recalled the July 10 UNSC statement which promised to consider facilitating deployment of IGASOM if conditions were right. Charge Wilgus shared the most recent Somalia Contact Group statement with Amb. Esipila.

¶5. (C) The Kenyan ambassador acknowledged that the Union of Islamic Court (UIC) remained opposed to the deployment of foreign peacekeepers, but argued that steady pressure from IGAD member states and political negotiations could change that. The AU planning mission in Somalia had found that most ordinary Somalis want deployment of international peacekeepers; only the UIC stood in the way. Complete agreement on the issue might not be possible, but adequate support existed. Esipila said that the GOK had called on both leaders from both the UIC and the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) to come to Nairobi the week of September 4 -- prior to the IGAD Summit. The Ambassador said he

expected each side to send more senior representatives than those they had sent to Arab League talks in Khartoum. He argued that Kenya was best positioned to serve as a broker in Somalia. He also expressed appreciation for the increased support AF A/S Jendayi Frazer offered to the TFG during her June visit to Addis Ababa.

POLITICAL STRATEGY: GET UIC TO BUY INTO TFI CHARTER

¶6. (C) Pol Chief sked Esipila what sort of political arrangement IGAD leaders hoped to support with IGASOM. What would be adequate "consensus in Somalia" as stated in the deployment plan? Esipila replied that the Transitional Federal Charter was still the political roadmap for IGAD. The Charter called for national elections in Somalia in 2009, and IGAD efforts would be designed to promote that outcome. It would be necessary to bring the UIC into that process. Esipila said he hoped UIC leaders would eventually place power-sharing demands on the table, which would offer them a point of entry. Negotiations would start from there. Esipila noted that Somali civil society should also be part of the process.

IGAD: CONDITIONS IN SOMALIA NO WORSE THAN DARFUR

¶7. (C) Esipila asked that the international community remember that IGAD was merely "carrying out a UN Chapter Eight mandate" in Somalia. IGAD welcomed "bright ideas" and support from partners, but was currently feeling a little abandoned as the UNSC simply assigned it tasks without much guidance or encouragement. Esipila argued that "circumstances for peacekeeping deployment in Darfur were worse than they are in Somalia." Deployments in Liberia and the DRC also highlighted the fact that peace missions could work in less than ideal conditions. Nonetheless, he noted that many in the international community had shown less stomach for moving forward in Somalia.

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